The Los Molinos Dam and Las Parcelas

In 1936, following a disagreement with the Spanish Government, General Franco of the Spanish Army was sent to an obscure post in the Canary Islands, from where he proclaimed a military rebellion. Following his victory in 1939, Franco established the Canary Islands Economic Command to centralize the economic and political direction of the islands. In 1943 General García Escámez, who had played a prominent role in the civil war, was appointed head of the Command.

The organization focused on intensifying agricultural production and building infrastructure and houses, to improve economic activity and weaken opposition to the dictatorship. It initiated several housing projects in the capital of Fuerteventura, then known as Puerto Cabras, and in 1945 began a new project called the Los Molinos Settlement.

Between Tefia and Los Molinos, a substantial dam was built in the hills, and 30 parcels each of about 2 hectares of land were laid out on the plain below, connected to the dam by a network of channels. Houses were built to a standard design on 23 of the plots, and all were given to 30 poor families from Puerto Cabras. There were also lime kilns and a school.

The 200 residents of what became known as the Colonia Rural García Escámez were given financial support to plant a variety of vegetables, and substantial amounts of alfalfa for use as animal fodder and for sale in Gran Canaria.

The parcels could not be sold to third parties but could be passed down within the family, although recently there have been moves to lift this restriction. Over the years there had been illegal building in the village, and in 2019 the Ayuntiamento demolished three houses and a farm, so effectively that it is hard to see where the buildings had been.

The village, now known as Las Parcelas, has a church and social centre, and the parcel owners, or parceleros, have renovated the channels that bring water from the Los Molinos dam.

In 2008 Spain ordered the renaming of all streets commemorating figures from the Franco regime, and many

streets in Fuerteventura have changed as a result, including Avenida Nuestra Señora del Carmen in Corralejo, which was previously Avenida Generalissimo Franco. But the lasting benefits of General García Escámez' work at Las Parcelas have made politicians reluctant to rename the street in Rosario that still bears his name, and his appointment as honorary mayor of Puerto del Rosario has never been revoked.

PRESIDENCIA DEL GOBIERNO
PLAN de ADOPCION de FUERTEVENTURA
LIMPIEZA DEL VASO

COLONIA RURAL
GARCIA ESCAMEZ
ESTAS OBRAS
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POR EL MANDO ECONOMICO
DEL ARCHIPIELAGO
SIENDO CAPITAN GENERAL
DE CANARIAS
EL EXCMO. SR. D. FRANCISCO
GARCIA ESCAMEZ E INIESTA
AÑO 1946